Far South Coast Nature Tourism and Recreation Plan May 2004

List of Amendments

Amendment 1 – Made 31 May 2004

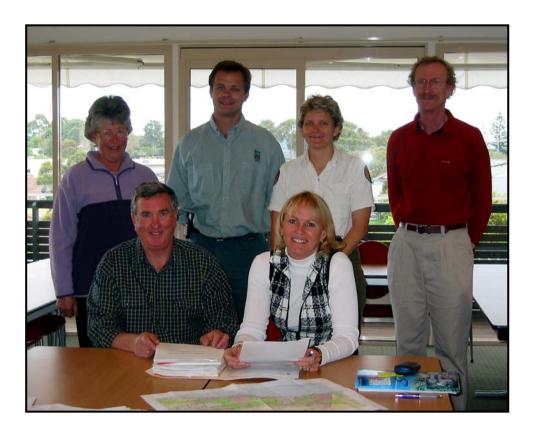








Far South Coast
Nature Tourism and Recreation Plan



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Department of Lands



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE FAR SOUTH COAST REGION: The Far South Coast Region extends from the Kings Highway near Batemans Bay to the north, and south to the NSW/Victorian border. The natural and unspoilt beauty of the region is a distinctive feature that has led to the development of a significant nature based tourism industry. Natural attractions are the key 'top of mind' images that tourists associate with the region, and are the main reason why many tourists visit the area.

THIS PLAN: This Plan was prepared by a multi-agency task force, which included representatives form the NSW NPWS, Eurobodalla Tourism, Sapphire Coast Tourism, SF NSW, Umburra Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Tours, Department of Lands and the community. It covers all public land tenure within the region (National Parks, State Forests, Council owned lands and community lands).

The principles and outcomes of this plan are consistent with the State Governments draft 'Nature in Tourism: A Plan for NSW 2003-2005', in that it is underpinned by the values of sustainability, effective partnerships and quality visitor experiences. Similar to the 'Nature in Tourism Plan,' this plan focuses on marketing, product development (visitor experiences), provision of infrastructure, integrated planning, partnerships and market research.

RECREATION TOURISM DATABASE: As a first step in developing the plan, the Taskforce compiled a comprehensive database of Regional Nature Tourism and Recreation (NTR) sites and operators. With further development (such as changing the interface of the database so that it is web-based), this database will be made available at all visitor centres. It will be an excellent information resource for all visitor centres through the region.

KEY OUTCOMES

PART A BACKGROUND In Part A you will find information on why and how we have prepared the plan, how the region is defined, key players and their roles, existing Regional NTR opportunities, regional tourism trends, gaps and opportunities. Existing opportunities are assessed and gaps identified against the following five key areas:

- ⇒ Sites and Products
- \Rightarrow Programs and Tours
- ⇒ Information and Interpretation
- ⇒ Marketing and Promotion
- ⇒ Partnerships and Integrated Planning

PART B PRINCIPLES: Provides a brief overview of the 8 key principles and criteria that the Taskforce applied to identify the opportunities and actions within the plan. The key principles are:

- 1. Ecological Sustainability and Adaptive Management
- 2. Educational Experiences
- 3. Diversity and regional Context
- 4. Criteria for the Identification of Suitable Locations/Sites
- 5. Partnerships
- 6. Understanding Visitors
- 7. Minimising and Monitoring Impacts
- 8. Consultation with the Community

PART C THE PLAN identifies objectives and actions for the 5 key areas based on the application of the 8 key principles. It also includes recommendations for priorities and implementation.

The 5 key objectives and examples of actions within each are:

- ⇒ **Sites and Products:** Through the consideration of regional demand and identification of opportunities, develop high quality NTR sites/products, especially:
 - NTR experiences/opportunities in the hinterland/escarpment areas;
 - Increased diversity of walking tracks; and
 - Basic accommodation in proximity of coastal and hinterland Parks.

Example: the creation of middle distance walking tracks and opportunities in the Escarpment Parks (Monga NP, Deua NP, Wadbilliga NP)

⇒ **Information and Interpretation:** Encourage the development of accurate, informative, imaginative and entertaining approaches to the provision of both information and interpretation of the natural environment.

Example: the development of "theme-based" brochures on NTR opportunities within the region, across all land tenures.

⇒ Partnerships and Integrated Planning: Enhance cooperation, planning and partnerships between land management agencies, the industry and community for the successful and effective provision of NTR product and infrastructure.

Example: The establishment of an on-going NTR network that updates and oversees the implementation of this plan.

⇒ **Programs and Tours:** Encourage high quality NTR programs and tours that enable better access and experience to the regions outstanding natural environments for visitors, and especially to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Programs.

Example: Conduct annual training and familiarisation for local tour operators.

⇒ **Marketing and Promotion:** To support marketing and promotional activities that highlights the regional character and particularly the diversity and wealth of NTR experiences available.

Example: Create and facilitate access to a regional image library.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Within this plan:

'NTR' means Nature Tourism and Recreation

'Tourism' means a conscious decision to travel away from a person's home environment, which is taken with some intention of satisfying recreational, leisure and pleasure needs which are perceived as being better satisfied than in their usual home environment.

'Recreation' is an activity, voluntarily undertaken, primarily for pleasure and satisfaction, during leisure time.

'Visitor' means a person who visits a site for the purpose of recreation. It is acknowledged that many visitors also travel to NTR sites for volunteer work, educational study and management work.

'Tourist' means those who make a conscious decision to travel away from their home environment (ie. visitors to public lands who do not live in the immediate vicinity of the destination). Hence all tourists are visitors but not all visitors are tourists as some visitors may come from the local area.

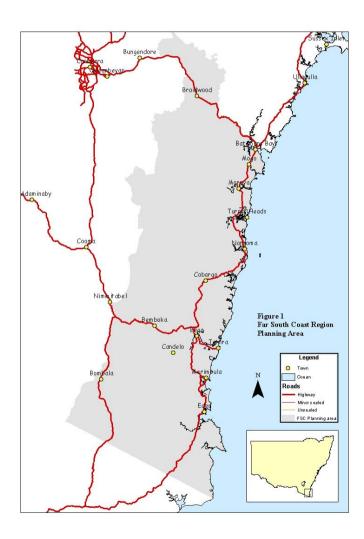
'Site' is a location that is a destination for visitors because there is an activity available (eg picnic, walking, sightseeing, historical or cultural interpretation, fishing etc) and some infrastructure to support and/or enhance the activity has been provided.

'NTR' encompasses all tourism in natural areas and can cover a wide range of activities from family picnics to wilderness walks and study tours. NTR focuses on the natural and cultural features of a site and education rather than just the activities undertaken.

'Far South Coast Region' is shown in Figure 1 and encompasses the area bounded by the sea to the east, the tablelands to the west, the Kings Highway to the North and the NSW/Victorian border to the north.

'South Coast Region' is as defined by Tourism NSW and extends from Berry in the north to Eden in the South including Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Sapphire Coast Tourism.

FIGURE 1 FAR SOUTH COAST REGION



PART A BACKGROUND

WHY, HOW, THE REGION, KEY PLAYERS, WHAT EXISTS, PREDICTED TRENDS, THE GAPS

PART A: Provides the background to this plan, why and how we have prepared it, how the region is defined, who are the key players and their roles within the region, a description of what Regional NTR opportunities exist, an assessment of both trends in tourism, and gaps in opportunities.

WHY PREPARE THIS PLAN

Under the Southern Regional Forestry Agreement (2001) and the Eden Regional Forestry Agreement (1999) both the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and State Forests of NSW (SF NSW) are required to prepare joint Regional Recreation Tourism Plans.

The NSW NPWS has taken the lead role in facilitating the development of a NTR Plan to meet this obligation, but also has extended its scope to incorporate NTR sites across all land tenures.

The principles and outcomes of this plan concur with the State Governments recently released 'Tourism NSW Masterplan - Towards 2020' (Tourism NSW, 2003a) and the draft 'Nature in Tourism: A plan for NSW 2003-2005' Tourism NSW, 2003b). The Far South Coast Region NTR Plan, like these two documents, is underpinned by the values of sustainability, effective partnerships and quality visitor experiences. Similar to the 'Nature in Tourism Plan' this plan includes the focus areas of marketing, product development (visitor experiences), provision of infrastructure, integrated planning and partnerships and market research. A key outcome of this NTR Plan will be strengthening of regional tourism through product development, promotion and information services.

HOW WE HAVE GONE ABOUT IT

In addressing the Regional Forestry Agreement requirements, the NPWS took the opportunity to broaden the relevance of this plan to the Far South Coast's tourism industry and other land managers with responsibility for NTR sites.

A project Taskforce was established (see Table 1). Membership included NPWS and SF NSW, representation from the regional tourism bodies (Sapphire Coast Tourism and Eurobodalla Nature Coast), the Department of Lands, and local Aboriginal communities and a representative from the community based Regional Advisory Committee to the NPWS. Bombala Council also contributed to the development of this Plan.

TABLE 1: TASKFORCE COMPOSITION

Representation
Dene Moore
Michelle Robinson
Dean Payne
Elaine Garvey
Ron Easton
Noel Whittem
Carla Rogers
Marcus Sandford
Stig Virtanen (Working with NPWS)

The Taskforce developed the plan through a series of discussion papers and forums. The discussion papers and minutes of the forums provide more detailed information to the plan and are available from the NPWS.

There were two key aspects to plan development:

- 1. The compilation of a comprehensive database of NTR Sites on public lands (non-urban) and of operators.
- 2. The Development of a Regional NTR Plan that identifies:
 - Agreed principles for NTR development;
 - Destinations to be maintained, improved or promoted for NTR;
 - Initiatives for specialist market attractions, guided NTR, interpretative, information and promotional programs;
 - Identification of partnership opportunities for viable sustainable tourism enterprises; and
 - Planning and management opportunities.

THE FAR SOUTH COAST REGION

NTR experiences in the Far South Coast Region can be found on both land and the sea. However, as the impetus for the preparation of this plan was land focused (NPWS and SF NSW through the Regional Forestry Agreement), this plan focuses principally on land based NTR.

The region offers a diverse range experiences in NTR. A total of 122 NTR sites are identified in this plan of which 71 are located in a coastal setting, 42 in the coastal hinterland and 9 in tableland landscape in the west of the region. Experiences most commonly provided for include picnicking (70 sites), fishing (61 sites), bushwalking (58 sites) swimming (56 sites), scenic viewing (37 sites) and camping (34 sites). Nature study/ bird watching and cultural heritage experiences were provided for at 14 and 12 sites respectively.

The NPWS estate within the Far South Coast Region covers approximately 840,000 hectares, of which 100,000 hectares represent new National Parks having been established as a result of the Southern Regional Forestry Agreement. The region encompasses 5 shires, 8 local Aboriginal Land

Councils, and embraces several major biogeographical zones from the southern tablelands and escarpment to coastal plains and hinterland.

NSW State Forests manage 31 State Forests in the region. The forests are dominated by a variety of eucalypt species including Silvertop Ash, Coastal Grey Box, Bloodwood, various Stringybarks, Monkey Gum and Woollybutt. Recreation activities available in these forests include hiking, birdwatching, bike riding, fishing, swimming, trail bike riding, horse riding and driving. To support these activities, State Forests provide trails, picnic and camping facilities, lookouts and roads.

Local Government and Community Trusts manage a diverse range of NTR sites across the region. NTR sites number 26 in total and range from well developed sites such as the Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens and the Tathra Forest Wildlife Reserve to emerging sites such as the Panboola Wetlands adjacent to Pambula township. These sites tend to be located close to population centres which makes them easily accessible by residents and visitors alike.

Nature-based tourism in the region is an emerging industry with a handful of small commercial operators working within the National Park estate and within State Forests. Otherwise, there are extensive opportunities for self-organised activities such as walking, picnicking, swimming, canoeing, bird watching through land managed by NPWS, State Forests and others.

A focus of the plan (in particular the database) will be on NTR sites based in localities that are destinations and have some form of infrastructure provided.

THE KEY PLAYERS AND THEIR ROLES

The main agencies involved in the management of NTR at a regional level are the NSW NPWS, SF NSW, NSW Department of Lands and Local Government (Eurobodalla Shire, Bega Valley Shire and Bombala Council). While the Commonwealth government and Tourism NSW have not been directly involved in this plan, relevant strategies and policies have provided context.

NSW NPWS

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (No 80) provides the framework for NTR management in National Parks. A key provision of this Act is that a National Park "provide opportunities for public appreciation and inspiration and sustainable visitor use and

enjoyment". Two key management principles include: "The promotion of public appreciation and understanding of the National Park's natural and cultural values" and "Provision for sustainable visitor use and enjoyment that is compatible with the conservation of the National Park's natural and cultural values".

The NPWS draft Corporate Plan 2003-2006 (NPWS, 2003) identifies "Working in partnership with communities to achieve conservation of the natural and cultural values of NSW" as one of four key result areas for the Service. The corporate priorities specific to recreation and tourism, which have been identified to achieve this key result, include the following:

- Working with Aboriginal communities and other government agencies to Increase the capacity of Aboriginal communities to participate in land use planning processes;
- b) Working with local communities to identify and develop opportunities for cultural tourism:
- Contributing to the identification and development of a spectrum of sustainable regional recreational opportunities so that Parks and reserves can be managed in a wider landscape context;
- Developing, where appropriate, adjoining rather than on Park visitor facilities to better protect the conservation values of the Park and to contribute to local economies and employment opportunities; and
- e) Expanding education programs to increase people's knowledge and understanding of conservation issues, and to improve their capacity to participate in conservation activities.

STATE FORESTS OF NSW

SF NSW Recreation Policy (State Forests NSW, 2000) aims to "Promote and encourage the use of State Forests for commercial and private recreation and tourism in a way which is complementary to SF NSW corporate objectives, whilst providing major benefits to the people of NSW in strategic areas". To achieve such, the policy identifies the following key objectives and strategies:

Objectives

- To develop recreation experiences for the promotion and community acceptance of SF NSW by exposing more people, more often to SF NSW products and services
- To facilitate the use of recreational opportunities in State Forests and associated commercial opportunities
- To promote the community benefit of ecologically sustainable development
- To provide economic and cultural benefits for regional and Aboriginal communities with access to the SF NSW where appropriate

Strategies

- Planning and promotion of recreation and tourism will be done in consultation with relevant public land management agencies in NSW through the development of joint recreational and tourism plans
- Identify new private and commercial recreational opportunities that are appropriate to the State Forest setting
- Develop and implement public relations strategies to support recreation and tourism initiatives including joint marketing strategies with NPWS on a Statewide and regional level
- Take advantage of commercial opportunities such as external commercial management of State Forest recreational facilities
- Establish and maintain strategic recreation facilities to enhance enjoyment of NSW State Forests
- Investigate the potential job, education and cultural benefits for regional and Aboriginal communities for cultural, industrial and historical recreation on NSW State Forests

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS

(Previously The Department of Land and Water Conservation)

Many Crown Reserves have natural setting and location attributes that contribute to the stock of NTR assets of a region. The principles for Crown land management are set out in Section 11 of the Crown Lands Act 1989 Act and include:

- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged.
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged.
- Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT plays an important role through its responsibility for ensuring that land development does not affect the values of natural attractions and by promoting environmentally sensitive design of tourist facilities, as well as managing local reserves. Local government is also strongly involved in marketing the local area through tourism organisations and provision of visitor information.

Both the public and private sectors provide **infrastructure facilities** necessary to support NTR. The government-industry partnership is broadly divided so that governments provide access (including airstrips, roads, jetties and boat ramps, walking trails, viewing platforms and directional signs), basic services (such as water and power), basic recreational facilities (such as shelters, day-use areas), and educational facilities (such as interpretive displays and signs). Private operators may provide some of these facilities as part of commercial ventures on private property, but also provide accommodation, transportation, and specialist equipment for outdoor activities (Tourism NSW, 2002a).

WHAT EXISTS, THE GAPS AND OBJECTIVES FOR DEVELOPMENT

The natural and unspoilt beauty of the region is a key distinctive feature that has led to the development of a significant tourism industry. The region's market strengths have been identified as it's natural assets, location near densely populated parts of Australia, rich natural and cultural heritage, and rural produce (Advance Tourism, 1997; ERM Mitchell McCotter, 1997). Natural attractions are the key 'top of mind' images that tourists associate with the region, and are the central reason why many tourists visit the area. It is the depth and breadth of natural attractions, across protected areas as well as areas of other tenure or management status, that distinguish the South Coast region, rather than any single hallmark attraction (Sinclair Knight Merz, 2002).

This section will paint the picture of existing NTR opportunities within the region, demands, gaps and considering these, the Taskforce objectives for development, according to the following categories:

- Sites and Products
- Programs and Tours
- Information and Interpretation
- → Marketing and Promotion
- → Partnerships and Integrated Planning

Sites and Products

- ⇒ **OBJECTIVE:** Through the consideration of regional demand, gaps and identification of opportunities, develop high quality NTR sites/products, especially:
 - NTR experiences/opportunities in the hinterland/escarpment areas;
 - Increased diversity of walking tracks; and
 - Basic accommodation in proximity of coastal and hinterland Parks.

The compilation of a comprehensive database of NTR sites located on public lands was one of the principal components of this plan. It was designed for use by land management agencies and the tourism industry.

The data was recorded using a Microsoft Access database with a standardised classification system for:

- Type of access
- Environmental setting
- Site recreational activities
- Day-use and associated facilities
- Walking tracks
- Camping
- Other site usage and
- Visitor monitoring/management

Samples of the data forms utilised showing the type of data collected are included in Attachment 1.

Information was sourced from a range of existing databases, input from Task Group members and field staff.

At the time of writing this plan, information for 122 NTR sites had been entered into the database. Of these 93 were in National Parks, 14 in State Forests and 15 on Lands managed by Local Government or Community Trusts. A summary list of sites is provided as Attachment 3 to this plan.

Information from the above database, combined with consultation with the community and the tourism industry was undertaken to assess shortfalls in current provision of NTR opportunities. NTR experiences/sites identified as being under-supplied in the region include:

- Experiences and scenic viewing areas to the west of the Princes Highway (hinterland/escarpment) easily accessed from coastal tourist centres.
- Walking tracks (eg more short coastal walks, interpreted nature trails, an escarpment walk and middle distance bush walks)
- Guided tours. The small number of operators licensed to operate in NPWS estate and within State Forests suggests a small scale of use of Parks/State Forests by tourism operators, and may suggest a lack of connection between commercial operators and land management agencies. NPWS/State Forests may need to consider how to better promote the Parks estate/State Forests for appropriate commercial use, and how to facilitate the licensing of operators.
- Nature-based accommodation especially basic/primitive camping adjacent to and within coastal and hinterland National Parks and State Forests - particularly south of the Snowy Mountains Highway.
- Tourist Drives. A key cooperative initiative between organisations has been the development of a number of tourist drives (eg. Coastal Road Tourist Drive, Braidwood – Araluen Loop Road, Bellbird Tourist Drive). However, there are issues associated with maintenance, degrees of driving difficulty, integration with sites and features, and poor signposting. The implication of this is that existing roads infrastructure may not be meeting its potential as a tourism resource.

Programs and Tours

⇒ OBJECTIVE: Encourage high quality NTR programs and tours that enable better access and experience to the regions outstanding natural environments for visitors, and especially to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Programs.

An inventory of NTR programs and tours was collated from existing databases, regional web pages and information provided by Task Force Members and is presented in Attachment 2.

Focus on the natural and cultural features of a program or tour and structured interpretation by the tour operator (rather than simply focusing on the activities undertaken albeit in a natural setting) were used as the principal criteria for inclusion in the database. Consequently a range of operators such as fishing charters, jet ski hire, social cruises and surfing schools were not included in this list.

A total of 47 tour operators, who had a specific NTR component were identified in the region. Most were based on the coast and the largest number focussed on whale/ dolphin viewing.

The NPWS in conjunction with Local Aboriginal Land Councils is the main provider of organised tour activities through its Discovery Ranger Program. SF NSW offers a limited number of interpretive and educational tours of forest management and forest ecology. Umbarra Cultural Tours (located near Bermagui) currently conducts Aboriginal cultural heritage tours and, as does Jigamy Farm (located near Ben Boyd National Park), on a limited basis.

The NPWS Discovery Ranger Program offers walks and talks for pre-booked community and tour groups at a number of locations, and extra programs during school holidays. However, the Discovery Program is becoming more focused on education and attempting to make links with formal education providers (such as the NSW Education Department's Bournda Environmental Education Centre) and community events (such as community performances and artistic events) rather than the standard 'walks and talks' in Parks. An objective of this approach is to reach out into the community to contact the non-traditional Park users and provide positive experiences for young people. In partnership with private operators, the NPWS has a tour program to Montague Island which includes an interpretative natural and cultural heritage walk.

Information and Interpretation

⇒ **OBJECTIVE:** Encourage the development of accurate, informative, imaginative and entertaining approaches to the provision of both information and interpretation of the natural environment.

Interpretation of natural and cultural values and promotion of appropriate visitor behaviour (such as minimal impact use) across the region is undertaken by the respective land managers in accordance with their Agency policies and objectives. A range of information (printed, signage and personal communication) is also available. Information and Interpretative material/activity includes:

- Visitor information centres operated by Sapphire Coast Tourism and Eurobodalla Nature Coast
- NPWS Information Centres
- On-site information provided at NPWS and State Forests offices
- Museums and attractions such as the Eden Killer Whale Museum
- Web Sites managed by the above agencies
- On-ground directional and routed signs
- A range of brochures on parks, reserves, sites, attractions and activities produced by NPWS, SF NSW, the Regional Tourism Associations, Local Government and Crown Reserve Trusts, Rural Tourism and Producers Association
- NPWS Discovery Program
- NPWS and SF NSW office and field staff

NPWS has developed a 'Regional Interpretation Strategy' (NPWS 1998) which describes international best practice standards for the design and presentation of interpretive products and services as well as key themes and messages across the region. This strategic approach ensures that the various sites present unique and important parts of the overall story in a structured and integrated way that avoids duplication whist providing consistent, professional and engaging information.

Marketing and Promotion

⇒ OBJECTIVE: To support marketing and promotional activities that highlights the regional character and particularly the diversity and wealth of NTR experiences available.

Marketing activity is currently undertaken for the Far South Coast Region by each of the key agencies in accordance with their policies and priorities. NSW NPWS and SF NSW produce printed and Web based material about NTR opportunities available across the State and within their respective regions. At the regional level each agency produces a range of material including brochures, posters, maps and displays.

Tourism NSW has a Statewide focus while the focus of the two regional tourism agencies (Sapphire Coast Tourism and Eurobodalla Nature Coast) is on promoting their respective regions within the context of state strategies. A key emphasis of both State and regional marketing is NTR opportunities being marketed through the themes of 'Nature Coast' and 'Sapphire Coast'. Tourism NSW uses six key themes to promote the state brand, which are: Nature, Beaches, Discovery, Food and Wine, Sports and Events and Sydney.

Rural Tourism and Producers Association also promote nature based tourism markets and partnership opportunities.

Data collected by Eurobodalla Tourism (personal communication D Moore) demonstrates that Tourist Information Centres along the Princes Highway have a key role in providing orientation within the region. As well as providing orientation, such sites can also offer an opportunity to deliver strategic messages to visitors. An example is Piper's Lookout on the Snowy Mountains Highway, which is visited by 56,000 people per annum (Virtanen, 1999).

Partnerships and Integrated Planning

⇒ OBJECTIVE: Enhance cooperation, planning and partnerships between land management agencies, the industry and community for the successful and effective provision of NTR product and infrastructure.

All of the key agencies recognise the importance of partnerships and integrated planning for effective NTR delivery, which motivated the formation of the Taskforce and development of this plan.

The NPWS recognises that growth of NTR depends on partnerships with other agencies and the private sector, and devotes significant resources to encouraging the local nature-based tourism industry. For example it has an award winning tourism partnership with private operators who run tours to Montague Island. The NPWS also actively encourages initiatives by the local Aboriginal communities such as tours of Gulaga National Park.

Another example of initiatives towards partnerships and integrated planning is NPWS approach to camping. The NPWS provides only basic camping within the Parks, thus allowing for development of a diversity of accommodation providers outside Park boundaries. This is also consistent with IUCN guidelines, with rates for camping pegged at equivalent commercial levels to maximise revenue returns, avoid direct competition with private enterprises and encourage major accommodation development off-Park. National Parks are also accessible to commercial tour operators under licence, and currently eight operators have licences to bring visitors into the Parks within the region.

State Forests are available for a wide range of uses, such as car rallies, horse riding and camping, and provide an alternate venue with less stringent restrictions than National Parks. Some events run on State Forest attract numerous people, who use the private sector for accommodation and food supplies. State Forests are also accessible to commercial tour operators under licence, and currently three operators have licences to bring visitors into forests within the Far South Coast Region.

TRENDS

Demand for visitation to NTR sites in the Far South Coast Region will come from two principal sources:

- The population of the region (residents)
- Visitors to the region (tourists)

Visitor motivations are also considered in the assessment of NTR trends.

Residential Populations

Evidence suggests that local communities contribute a significant proportion of visitors to NTR sites in the Far South Coast Region. Consideration of regional population trends and characteristics is therefore important when assessing future demand for NTR opportunities.

The estimated residential populations of the three larger shires in the Far South Coast Region are Bega Valley Shire (30,782), Eurobodalla Shire (34,131) and Bombala Shire (2640) (Department of Local Government, 2002). Population growth rates were predicted to stay at between 2% and 2.4% for the Eurobodalla Shire from 2001 to 2005 (Eurobodalla Shire, 2002) while the population of Bega Valley Shire is expected to increase by approximately 28% (between 2001 to 2020) to 41,200 (Bega Valley Shire, 2000).

The Johnstone Centre of Parks, Recreation and Heritage at Charles Sturt University (Lindberg and Lockwood, 1996) undertook a visitor survey of more than 600 visitors to Eurobodalla National Park in April 1996 and a community survey in late 1996 (Lindberg and Lockwood, 1996). This survey found 50% of visitors to the Park to be locals (who had less than one hour's travel time to the Park).

Data collected from visitor logbooks and customer feedback forms at six sites in the South East Forests National Park (SEF NP) demonstrated that between 18% and 59% of visitors to these sites were locals. (Virtanen, 1999). The large variation in proportion of locals to SEF NP sites could in part be explained by the fact that the sites with a high percentage of non-local visitations were those sites at major access routes such as the Snowy Mountains Highway (Pipers Lookout). The sites with high proportions of locals were sites that were destinations in their own right (Myanba Gorge and Six Mile Creek Day-use area).

Local population growth is likely to contribute somewhere between 1% and 2% to the annual growth in visitation to NTR sites. However, it is predicted that as the population grows it also will become more aged and lead to changes in patterns of site demand and use. Activities such as pleasure driving and walking for pleasure are likely to become even more popular than they are at present.

Visitors to the region

The South Coast (defined by Tourism NSW as extending from Berry to the Great Dividing Range and to the Victorian border) is the second most visited holiday destination in NSW outside of Sydney (Tourism NSW, 2002b), but on the basis of visitor nights, is the most

popular area outside of Sydney. In 2001 there were 2.65 million domestic overnight visitors (10% of the total domestic overnight visits in NSW) to the South Coast, spending 10 million visitor nights (11% of domestic visitor nights) (Tourism NSW, 2002b).

The size of the nature based tourism market within the region is difficult to measure. The NTR Discussion paper (Missing Link, 2001) highlighted this difficulty, but did provide estimates of 4.2 million visitors to NSW National Parks in 1999, making 22.5 million visits. There have been no comprehensive surveys of visitors to NTR sites within the Far South Coast Region.

The annual visitation pattern to the South Coast is characterised by large troughs and peaks, with peaks occurring in summer and troughs in winter. The traditional market for the South Coast is the family seaside holiday segment (Advance Tourism, 1997). The largest group of people visiting the region is parents with a youngest child aged between 6-14 years of age, while couples with children of various ages, and young couples without children, together form a high proportion of all visitors. These people are generally low to middle income earners who stay in budget accommodation. Twenty seven percent of visitors stay with friends or relatives, 23% at their own properties, 25% in caravan Parks or camping grounds, with only 11% staying in hotels, resorts and motels, and 10% in self-catering apartments or cottages. Retirees and weekend visitors from Canberra and the Southern Tableland also make up a significant proportion of the existing market. International visitors only make up a small proportion (2%) of visitors to the South Coast.

Visitors to the South Coast are generally highly mobile, with 93% of domestic visitors travelling in their own car, and 90% of international visitors travelling in private or rental vehicles (Tourism NSW, 2002b). This provides a greater degree of flexibility in travel plans, and allows visitors to choose where to go, and where to stop.

Tourist visitation to the region's NTR sites is likely to increase over the next five to ten year period. In the Industry Outlook survey by Tourism NSW in 2000, the natural environment was rated by tourism businesses as the most

important factor influencing tourism sales. The NSW Nature Tourism and Recreation Discussion Paper (Missing Link, 2001) notes that special interest tourism, and in particular NTR, provides the main motivation for visitor activity in NSW. NTR is reputed to be one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry, driven by growing interest in the natural environment, and an alternative, more stimulating tourism experiences to 'mass' tourism. Given that the Far South Coast Region is perceived to offer visitors with the opportunity to experience an unspoilt natural environment with minimal development, we might expect tourism in the region to increase.

Other unpredictable events such as SARS and increased threat of international terrorism may also have significant effects on domestic travel and visitation to the Far South Coast Region.

Visitor Motivations

Understanding why people visit sites is important to ensure that sites are developed and managed in a manner that not only meets conservation objectives but also the needs and expectations of visitors. While there is no research specifically relating to NTR sites, research undertaken at Eurobodalla National Park (Lindberg & Lockwood, 1996) found visitors tend to come to the Park for specific purposes (mostly fishing, surfing and camping) and non-specific purposes (relaxing, enjoying scenery and socializing). A majority of respondents to the survey participated in walking, swimming and fishing with picnicking, surfing and camping also being popular.

A survey of visitors to the South East Forests National Parks (Virtanen, 1999) found that the most popular activities were sightseeing, pleasure driving, picnicking and walking (less than 2 hours). The area's 'quiet and restful atmosphere', its 'natural/ scenic qualities' and its 'plants and animals' were the principal qualities that attracted visitors to the Park.

Places that attract nature tourists are generally those:-

- With unusual or outstanding natural features e.g. waterfalls, panoramic views, spectacular mountains;
- Which provide the opportunity for specific activities e.g. rocks for climbing, canyons, caves, rivers for canoeing/rafting;
- With unusual or rare plants, animals, birds or geomorphology which will attract specialist tours (but which must be managed with great care);

- With sufficient facilities to service the needs of the tourist but not so much that the setting is seen as too developed;
- With reasonably easy access to major transport routes and/or public transport;
- Which they know exist through information and interpretation (including guided tours); and/or
- Which can be included in a theme-based tour.

(Southern Highlands and Illawarra Regional NTR Task Force, 2002)

PART B KEY PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

PART B: Provides a brief overview of the key principles and criteria that the Taskforce applied to identify the objectives and actions within the plan (Part C). The principles are also applicable and recommended for application during Plan Implementation (Part C).

The Taskforce in the identification of objectives and actions has applied 8 key principles for NTR. These objectives and actions are outlined in Part C – The Implementation Plan. The key principles are:

1. Ecological Sustainability and Adaptive Management

NTR experiences in the NPWS Far South Coast Region will be identified and developed applying principles related to ecological sustainabity and adaptive management, which include:

Where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation (the precautionary principle);

The need to develop a strong, growing and diversified economy which can enhance the capacity for environmental protection should be recognised:

Decisions and actions should provide for broad community involvement on issues that affect them; and

This plan will be dynamic, adaptive and reviewed frequently to ensure that proposed actions are consistent with meeting defined objectives and principles.

2. Experiences that are Educational

NTR experiences should provide opportunities to appreciate and learn about the natural and cultural environment, generally through the provision of (1) appropriate promotion, (2) orientation, (3) information, (4) interpretative and (5) education products. This

hierarchy of levels means that basic visitor needs relating to 'what's available' and 'how do I get there safely' must be met before visitors become receptive to higher level

interpretive and educational messages which may lead to greater understanding, behaviour change and advocacy. Face to face contact with a professional is often the most effective form of communication.

3. Diversity and regional Context

Planning for NTR opportunities should be undertaken within a regional context, with consideration to the provision of a range of recreational opportunities across a region (that is not all types of experiences or settings will be available within the one National Park/ State Forest). Visitors desire a variety of experiences such as escape, rest, achievement and exercise and, as a means of experiencing nature; they undertake a variety of recreational activities. It is desirable for each activity to be able to be undertaken in a range of natural settings. For example, to be able to walk in different types of forest or by a river or the sea, and to have a range of facilities available for each activity ranging from primitive to developed.

4. Criteria for the Identification of Suitable Locations/Sites

The following criterion were developed and considered by the Steering Group in the development of the plan (Part C). They are also suggested for application in plan implementation:

Suitable Locations/Sites for NTR

- Locations where a range of recreational activities are readily accessible to encourage visitors to stay longer thus providing greater scope for interpretation of the site's values;
- Sites with panoramic views;

- Interesting unique vegetation eg. rainforest, heath, mangroves or a diversity of types in a small area;
- Sites where wildlife is likely to be observed, encountered and/or interpreted (that is not necessarily seen);
- Natural features such as waterfalls, escarpments, caves, unusual rock outcrops;
- Aboriginal values suitable for interpretation:
- Historic features with interpretive value:
- Attractive coastline: and
- Canoeable rivers in a natural setting.

Unsuitable Locations/Sites for NTR

- Diverse and high quality habitat which is currently undisturbed;
- Locations with endemic species or other features sensitive to disturbance eg caves with high invertebrate populations;
- Important habitat for threatened fauna;
- Core koala habitat:
- Rare plants which have only a single or a few small local populations:
- Aboriginal sites which the Aboriginal community does not want promoted;
- Declared wilderness areas (except for certain appropriate activities such as non-commercial study groups); and
- Sites where public use must be excluded for management reasons such as safety, protection of water quality or rehabilitation.

Sites which may be suitable given high investment in sensitive design, protective infrastructure and site management

- Locations of threatened plants or plants with high specimen value;
- Vulnerable Aboriginal sites such as cave art and rock arrangements;
- Vulnerable geological sites such as significant fossil beds;
- Locations susceptible to erosion;
- Habitat for threatened fauna which is less sensitive to disturbance;
- Rainforest, tall open forest, heath, wetland; and
- Visually prominent locations.

For sites that are acceptable for tourism use, preference should be given to:

- Locations which are already developed or disturbed; and
- Locations with good vehicle access.

5. Partnerships

A co-operative approach to the planning, management and marketing of NTR programs and infrastructure will be encouraged across the Far South Coast Region. Participation will be sought from key stakeholders (land management agencies, tourism bodies, Aboriginal communities and the tourism industry).

6. Understanding Visitors

Measuring visitor numbers and assessing visitor preferences and motivations is critical to effective plan implementation.

7. Minimising and Monitoring Impacts

Monitoring of site usage and visitor impact is considered an essential component of effective management and management agencies will be encouraged to implement monitoring programs for their respective NTR sites. Minimal impact use will be promoted through information and interpretation programs associated with NTR sites.

8. Consultation with Community

Consultation with both the community and the tourism industry will form an on-going component of plan development and implementation.

Note: Before the Steering Group commenced work on this plan, a series of workshops were held in 2002 with the various agencies, representatives of the community, tourism industry and staff of the NPWS to assess shortfalls in current provision of NTR opportunities. Most of this consultation is documented in the report titled *Draft Precinct Strategy Plan for NTR for the Northern and Central areas of the Far South Coast Region* -Charles Sturt University, 2002. The Steering Group during the preparation of this plan also identified additional shortfalls. These are addressed in the objectives and actions under the 5 key areas in Part C – The Plan.

PART C THE PLAN

Objectives, Actions, who (responsibility for action), priority

PART C: is the plan identifying objectives, actions and recommendations for plan implementation.

Part C is the plan. It identities objectives and suggests actions based on consideration of the background (Part A) and application of principles (Part B). More background information including rationale is provided in the Discussion Papers and Minutes of the Steering Group meetings.

The Table identifies for the 5 key areas:

- A key Objective
- Actions to fulfil the objective
- Who: Which agency is recommended to take the lead role
- General comments regarding the proposed action and/or status of the action.

It prioritises the actions into the following categories:

Priority Level 1: Priority for action and funding within five years of plan adoption. Actions where implementation would result in significant improvements to the management, promotion and delivery of NTR experiences in the region.

Priority Level 2: Actions to be completed following completion of Priority Level One.

NOTE ABOUT STATUS: For product/site improvements, the plan identifies status of the action according to whether it is within a draft or adopted plan, if it is funded and if so if construction/implementation is proceeding. A 'Plan/Strategy' for this purpose refers to any formal planning that must be undertaken in order for the action to proceed. This may be, for example a Plan of Management or a 'Statement of Interim Management Intent' that precedes a plan of management. All actions are recommendations of the Taskforce subject to appropriate environmental assessment and consultation procedures under the relevant legislation. For example through the preparation of a Plan of Management and application of the principles within this plan, it may be found that a recommended site improvement is not appropriate.

TABLE 1: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
SITI	ES AN	D PRODU	CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identificinterland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks *	cation of o	opportunities, develop high	quality NTR sites/products, especially: *NTR
1	One	Monga NP	Create middle distance walking track near Penance Grove, River Forest Road		NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
2	One	Deua NP	Investigate/develop middle distance walking tracks at Berlang Camping area (circuit), Wyanbene Camping area, and Marble Arch	2	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
3	One	Deua NP	Investigate/develop track-heads for remote bushwalking/ fishing on the Shoalhaven River (Krawarree Rd at Berlang) and Deua River (Little Sugar Loaf Rd)	3	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
4	One	Wadbilliga NP	Improve access to 2WD standard to Tuross Falls/ Cascades Camping and Day-Use Area	4	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
5	One	Eurobodalla NP	Investigate the establishment of a walking track network between Dalmeny and Potato Point and; between Tuross Head and Congo Point to provide minimum impact access to, and interpretation of, the coastal environment and selected cultural sites.	5&6	NPWS/ Eurobodalla Land Care	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
6	One	Eurobodalla NP	Develop interpreted walking tracks with forest or estuary theme at Brou Lake	7	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
7	One	Eurobodalla NP	Upgrade access and camping/visitor facilities at Brou Lake	7	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
8	One	Mimosa Rocks NP	Develop a walking track plan for the Park that investigates a coastal walk connecting Nelson Beach and Moon Bay, Middle Beach and Gillards. Consider connection to Mogareeka	8	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
9	One	SEFNP	Upgrade day-use facilities and walking track at Goodenia Rainforest	9, 13	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
SIT	ES AN	ID PRODU	CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identif	ication of c	opportunities, develop high	quality NTR sites/products, especially: *NTR
10	One	SEFNP	interland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks of Develop a walking track from Pheasants Peak to Myanba Gorge via Waratah Creek camping area	10	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy. Funded
11	One	Wadbilliga NP	Provide signage for drive routes around Cascades and Tuross Falls along Falcon Rd, Wadbilliga Rd, and Wandella Rd	11	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
12	One	Gulaga NP	Investigate the development of trailhead and interpreted trails in partnership with the Aboriginal community	12	NPWS and Local Aboriginal community	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
13	One	SEF NP	Upgrade day-use facilities at Wolumla Peak Lookout	14	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
14	One	SEF NP	Upgrade day-use facilities at Myrtle Mountain Lookout, including short loop walks	14	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
15	One	SEF NP	Develop day-use facilities at confluence of Rutherfords and Carter creeks north of the Snowy Mountains Highway adjacent to Pipers Lookout.	15	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
16	One	Nethercote Flora Reserve	Upgrade Nethercote Falls Day-use facilities	16	SF NSW	Construction/Implementation proceeding
17	One	Platypus Reserve Bombala River	Upgrade day-use facilities and presentation at site.	17	Bombala Shire Council	Construction/Implementation proceeding
18	One	Monga National Park	Develop low key camping facilities along Macquarie Road	18	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
19	One	Mimosa Rocks NP	Investigate feasibility of provision of camping and walking track facilities at Goalen Head, Hidden Valley	19	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
20	One	Ben Boyd National Park	Upgrade Bittangabee camping area by clearer definition of sites and vehicle access	20	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy. Funded.

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
SITI	ES AN	ID PRODU	CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identif	cation of c	opportunities, develop high	quality NTR sites/products, especially: *NTR
	ences/opp	ortunities in the h	interland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks '			coastal and hinterland Parks
21	One	Ben Boyd NP- Green Cape Lighthouse	Re-roof and upgrade Lighthouse accommodation. Improve access to and interpretation of heritage values. Expand range of accommodation options and progress commercial lease/partnership opportunities.	21	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy. Partly Funded
22	One	SEFNP	Construct (self guided) walking track at confluence of Rutherfords and Carter creeks north of the Snowy Mountains Highway adjacent to Pipers Lookout.	24	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
23 24	One	SEFNP	Investigate options for medium distance walking experiences in the Egan Peaks/Yowaka Section	25	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
25	One	SEFNP	Develop trailheads for dispersed walking at Mines Road terminus for access to Wog Wog Mountain and White Rock Mountain	26	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
26	One	SEFNP	Investigate walking track opportunities in the Six-Mile Creek area.	27	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
27	One	SEFNP	Develop viewing platform and walking tracks at Nunnock Swamp.	28	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
28	One	Bournda NP	Create a disabled access standard walking track between Scotts Bay and Hobart Beach, including interpretive signage	50	NPWS	Proposal not identified in adopted plan
29	One	Bournda NP	Redesign Hobart Beach Campground and upgrade facilities	47	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy.

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identifinterland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks			
30	One	Wallaga Lake to Bermagui Crown Reserve	Develop cultural/ historic interpretation and additional viewing platform for the Bermagui Coastal walk in collaboration with the local Aboriginal community.	29	Bega Valley Shire Council/ Lands Department	Identified in adopted plan/strategy. Funded (partial).
31	One	Wallaga Lake to Bermagui Crown Reserve	Develop visitor facilities/access to Montreal Goldfields to interpret the area's gold mining history.	30	Lands Department	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
32	One	Ben Boyd National Park	Construct look-out at Boyd's Tower, raised boardwalk around tower to new lookout. Upgrade facilities such as toilet, existing tracks ensuring wheel chair standard disabled access. Upgrade Disaster Bay look-out en-route to Green Cape.	31	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
33	One	Ben Boyd National Park, Davidson Whaling Station, State Forests and Aboriginal land	Investigate linking Boyd's Tower with Davidson Whaling Station (extending the Light to Light walk) and from Green Cape to Wonboyn.	31	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
34	One	Davidson Whaling Station Historic Site	Develop new carpark, access road, linked short walks around the site, upgrade interpretations	49	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
SIT	ES AN	D PRODU	CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identifi	ication of c	opportunities, develop high	quality NTR sites/products, especially: *NTR
experi	ences/opp	ortunities in the h	interland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks *	Basic acc	ommodation in proximity of	coastal and hinterland Parks
35	One	Ben Boyd NP	Upgrade facilities at Saltwater Day Use and Camping Area	48	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
36	One	Monga National Park	Develop new Day-Use site and facilities on River Forest Rd.	32	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
37	One	Monga National Park	Provide horse riding, bushwalking and mountain bike riding link between Corn trail and Mongarlowe River	33	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
38	One	Monga National Park	Provide orientation and interpretation facilities at Track Heads for Corn Trail and River Forest Road day-use areas	34	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding (Partial)
39	One	Panboola Wetland	Design and install Interpretative signage relating to natural and cultural values. Restore water regime in old racecourse area.	44	Pambula Wetlands and Heritage Project committee	Identified in draft plan/strategy
40	One	Wallagaraugh Forest Drive	Update signs and improve amenities.	45	State Forests	Identified in adopted plan/strategy. Funded
41	One	Tathra Forest Wildlife Reserve	Undertake repairs to the walking track network to ensure user safety. Develop one of the existing walking tracks to disabled access standard.	46	Tathra Forest Wildlife Reserve Committee and Department of Lands	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
42	One	Ben Boyd NP	Aboriginal Culture Camp. Construct shelter shed and provide additional infrastructure –toilets, fire rings and screen planting		NPWS and Local Aboriginal community	Construction/Implementation proceeding
43	One	Ben Boyd NP	Upgrade existing facilities including beach access tracks, dune protection fencing, walking track to point and access to rocky headland and midden protection		NPWS	Proposal/not identified in existing plan
44	One	Ben Boyd NP	Carpark and beach access upgrade		NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
45	One	Ben Boyd NP	Pinnacles walking track upgrade		NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
46	One	Ben Boyd NP	Pambula River walking track viewing platform seats and upgrade access track from fire trail		NPWS	Proposal/not identified in existing plan

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)		Status/Comment
SIT	ES AN	ID PRODU	CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identifi	cation of c	opportunities, develop high	quality NTR sites/products, especially: *NTR
			interland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks *	Basic acc		
47	One	Ben Boyd NP	Undertake planning and upgrade Severs Beach day use area to ensure Aboriginal site protection whilst providing facilities for day use visitors		NPWS	Proposal/not identified in existing plan
48	Two	Ben Boyd NP	Asling Beach to Nth Head walk. Develop a walking track to Nth Head utilising existing fishing track along headland		NPWS	Proposal/ not identified in existing plan
49	Two	Ben Boyd NP	Develop walking track and bird hide in new addition area north of Pambula beach		NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
50	Two	Ben Boyd NP	Provide toilet facilities at Terrace Beach		NPWS	Proposal/not identified in existing plan
51	Two	Wadbilliga NP	Develop track-heads for remote bushwalking/ fishing on the Tuross River (Wandella Rd, Bourkes Rd)	22	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
52	Two	Wadbilliga NP	Develop track-heads for self reliant recreation into Tuross Gorge, and Jillicambra Mountain	23	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
53	Two	Eurobodalla NP	Develop interpreted walk/boardwalk with estuary /birdwatching theme at Lake Nargal	35	NPWS	Identified in adopted plan/strategy
54	Two	Gulaga NP	Develop interpretive walking trail at Wallaga Lake	36	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
55	Two	SEFNP	Develop a walking track from Wolumla Peak to Goodenia Rainforest	37	NPWS	Identified in draft plan/strategy
56	Two	Deua NP	Upgrade interpretation at Berlang Rest Area, the Big Hole, Marble Arch, and Wyanbene Rest area	38	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
57	Two	Regional	Encourage appropriate regional 4wd experiences with a network of regional driving opportunities through all Estate identified, emphasising opportunities in State Forests.		NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
58	Two	Biamanga NP	Investigate further development of cultural heritage opportunities and cultural tours in the Mumbulla Creek Falls area.	40	NPWS and Local Aboriginal community	Proposal

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			CTS: Through the consideration of regional demand and identifinterland/escarpment areas *Increased diversity of walking tracks			
59	Two	Kooraban NP	Investigate the feasibility of a network of mountain bike trails in Kooraban NP	41	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
60	Two	SEF NP	Investigate promoting Back Creek and Sugarloaf trails (Yowaka Section) as 2WD route and Postmans Track and Cattleman's Track (Tantawangalo Section) for use as 4WD routes through the SEF NP hinterland	42	NPWS	For consideration during preparation of a Plan of Management
61	Two	SEF NP-	Develop new basic camping areas at Waratah Creek and Nunnock Swamp	43	NPWS	Construction/Implementation proceeding
			ID INTEGRATED PLANNING: Enhance coopered effective provision of NTR product and infrastructure.	eration, pla	anning and partnerships be	etween land management agencies, the industry and
62		Regional	Establish Regional NTR planning and management network to: continue to promote and monitor the implementation of this plan; encourage stakeholders to work closely together and share information about new program developments; and encourage a systematic and coordinated approach to provision of Regional NTR opportunities.	N/A	NPWS SF NSW Sapphire Coast Tourism Eurobodalla Tourism Department Lands	A charter for the group is required. It is appropriate that the NPWS take the lead role in establishing the network as it has in the preparation of this Plan. Network to meet 3 times a year. The secretariat function should be rotated on an annual basis. A priority focus of the group could be in attracting funds for the implementation of the Plan

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			ID INTEGRATED PLANNING: Enhance coope	ration, pla	anning and partnerships b	etween land management agencies, the industry and
63	One	Regional	Develop Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Thematic Tours and Precincts. Link NTR sites with commercial Aboriginal enterprises.	N/A	NPWS	This would involve both new opportunities and development of existing opportunities for example partnerships with Umburra Cultural Tours (Gulaga National Park) and Jigamy Farm (Ben Boyd National Park).
64	One	Regional/ Statewide	Present plan and progress updates to stakeholder tourism and land management agencies, the Aboriginal community, tourism industry and local Councils.	N/A	NTR Network	This may be a critical component in achieving endorsement of the Plan from Stakeholder agencies and attracting funding.
65	Two	Regional	Negotiate with the Yuin-Monaro Aboriginal people about presentation of information and interpretation for:	N/A	NPWS Aboriginal Community and business ventures/tourism SF NSW Sapphire Coast Tourism Eurobodalla Tourism	Commenced in some areas (for example for Deua NP, Wadbilliga NP, Monga NP, Gourock NR, Badja Swamps NR as part of planing processes)

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			INTERPRETATION: Encourage the development of	accurate,	informative, imaginative an	d entertaining approaches to the provision of both
inform 66		interpretation of the Regional	ne natural environment. Conduct annual training and familiarisations for: Tour operators; Information centre staff; Boards of advisory committees and tourism associations; and Accommodation providers	N/A	NTR Network	Essential component of visitor information system.
67	Two	SEF NP	Promote and interpret cultural heritage values of Wilkinson's Hut and SEF Protest Sites	N/A	NPWS	
68	One	Regional	Implement the NPWS Far South Coast Region Visitor Monitoring Strategy (Virtanen, 2003). Integrate this program with other monitoring programs.	N/A	NTR Network	The strategy is in the process of being implemented in the NPWS estate. Later implementation on other land tenures suggested.
69	One	Regional	Seek funding to further develop the NTR database to a standard suited to web based information and by the region's visitor information centres. Seek the incorporation of NTR database links into regional web sites.	N/A	NTR Network	The final database will accommodate information to answer the type of questions visitors often ask. For example: Where can I do activity X (fish, bird watch, walk)? Where can I camp and what facilities do they have? Where can I go for a (short) walk and is it well marked and easy walking? (Ann Prescott & Associates Pty Ltd, 1999)
70	One	Regional	Review the regional Interpretations Strategy biannually	N/A	NPWS SF NSW	,

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			INTERPRETATION: Encourage the development of	accurate,	informative, imaginative an	d entertaining approaches to the provision of both
71	One	Regional	Develop Pipers Lookout and Braidwood/Monga NP as gateways to the NPWS Far South Coast Region. Update NTR displays in Braidwood and Batemans Bay visitor centres.	N/A	NPWS - Sapphire Coast Tourism - Eurobodalla Tourism	Pipers Lookout may become a more significant gateway with the development of the Rutherfords Creek/ Finns Hut development.
72	One	Regional	Facilitate and encourage the development of off-Park natural and cultural heritage interpretation utilising the skills and experience within the NPWS. Examples might include: Pambula Wetlands Bermagui Wetlands Eden Boardwalk Jigamy and Umburra Cultural Centres	N/A	NTR Network	

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			INTERPRETATION: Encourage the development of	accurate,	informative, imaginative an	d entertaining approaches to the provision of both
			ne natural environment.		T	
73	One	Regional	Upgrade/develop interpretation on significant features and processes at: Berlang Rest Area The Big Hole Marble Arch Wyanbene Cascades Bakers Flat Bendethera Lake Creek Badja Mountain Pinnacles walk, Severs Beach, Barmouth Beach - Ben Boyd NP.	N/A	NPWS	The NPWS has a program of implementing interpretation strategies throughout the NPWS Far South Coast Region.
74	Two	Regional	Review directional signage into and out of Regional NTR sites to ensure safe and easy access.	N/A	NPWS SF NSW Department of Lands	Initial priority is in the Coolangubra Forest Drive/ Myanba Gorge/ Waratah Creek locality and Ben Boyd National Park.
75	One	Regional	Prepare a new regional 'NTR lead brochure' that includes NTR experiences and opportunities across all land tenures. This should outline regional theme(s), the range of land types and charter of management agencies.	N/A	NTR Network	A brochure could be subject to a joint funding application prepared by the proposed NTR planning and management network.

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			INTERPRETATION: Encourage the development of	accurate,	informative, imaginative an	d entertaining approaches to the provision of both
	ation and	interpretation of the	ne natural environment.	1	T	
76			 Develop regional theme based promotional material (including themed drives such as SEF NP Drive) with priority being given to: Wildlife experiences (eg land based whale watching) Landscapes for which the region is known- eg Tall forests, rainforest Cultural and heritage experiences- eg. whaling, Aboriginal heritage, escarpment trails. Activities Walking (coastal and hinterland) Horse riding and cycling 4WD driving Endangered species Forestry activity 	N/A	NTR Network	Aboriginal sites should only be promoted on condition that: Agreement of the relevant local Aboriginal land Council and other relevant Aboriginal community organisations has been obtained; A conservation study has been prepared and any management works necessary to protect the site from damage have been implemented; and The site will be interpreted in a manner that promotes public appreciation of its value and knowledge of Aboriginal culture, preferably by Aboriginal people in face-to-face situation.
MA	RKFTI	NG AND P	ROMOTION: To support marketing and promotional activi	ties that h	ighlights the regional charac	eter and particularly the diversity and wealth of NTR
experi	iences ava	nilable.	Tempore in a support marketing and promotional activity	iioo iiial II	iginignio tilo rogional olialat	otor and particularly the diversity and wealth of first
77	One	Regional	Facilitate access to quality images held by participating agencies for use in promotional and display material.	N/A	NTR Network	Access to good quality visual material is essential for successful promotion of the region.
78	Two	Regional	Liaise with the rural tourism organisation and Sapphire Coast Producers Association to incorporate a listing of tours and destinations in the region within state and national ecotourism guides and books.	N/A	Sapphire Coast Tourism. Eurobodalla Tourism	

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			OURS: Encourage high quality NTR programs and tours the original Cultural Heritage Programs.	at enable	better access and experie	nce to the regions outstanding natural environments
79	One	Regional	Build the capacity of commercial tour operators to deliver quality interpretive programs by: Offering training in interpretation to ensure that accurate information about the ecology and cultural heritage of the region is offered Working collaboratively in the development and delivery of programs and specialist tours such as the whaling industry of the NPWS Far South Coast Region. Offering training/skill development specific to Aboriginal communities/tourism	N/A	NTR Network	
80	One	Regional	Conduct annual training and familiarisations for: Tour operators; Information centre staff; Boards of advisory committees and tourism associations; and Accommodation providers	N/A	Sapphire Coast Tourism. Eurobodalla Tourism NPWS SF NSW Department of Lands Other land management agencies	Essential component of visitor information system.

Initiative No.	Priority Level	Area/Park	Action	Site I.D (see Figure 3 – Attachment 4)	Responsible Agency (Lead Agency shown in bold)	Status/Comment
			OURS: Encourage high quality NTR programs and tours the	at enable	better access and experie	nce to the regions outstanding natural environments
for vis	itors, and	especially to Abo	original Cultural Heritage Programs.			
81	Two	Regional	Institute negotiations for accreditation for nature based tourism operators that provide a program with an agreed information and presentation standard.	N/A	NPWS SF NSW	
82	Two	Regional	Provide Discovery Program activities outside the traditional holiday period. Investigate partnerships with local tour operators in this regard. Ensure that activities are subject to a theme, values and presentation contract.	N/A	NPWS	
83	Two	Regional	Provide information about NTR experiences at all RTA (Roads and Traffic Authority) rest stops along the Princes, King, Snowy Mountains and Cann Valley highways.	N/A	Land management agencies and RTA	

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – FSC NTR Database – Entry Fields

Attachment 2 – FSC Inventory of Programs and Tours

Attachment 3 –Sites in NTR Database

Attachment 4 – Figure 3: Sites recommended for improvements (Table 1)

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ATTACHMENT 1

Far South Coast NTR Database Data Entry Fields

Section	Field	Data
Site details		
	Site name	Free text
	Landscape &	Coastal: Bay
	local setting	Coastal: Island
		Coastal: Headland
		Coastal: Ocean beach
		Coastal: Estuary/Lake
		Hinterland: Water site
		Hinterland: Eucalypt forest
		Hinterland: Rainforest
		Hinterland: Grassland/Heath
		Hinterland: High point
		Tableland: Water site
		Tableland: Forest/Woodland
		Tableland: Grassland/Heath
		Tableland: Karst
		Tableland: High point
		Alpine: Water site
		Alpine: Forest/Woodland
		Alpine: Grassland/Heath
		Alpine: Karst
		Alpine: High point
	Dominant	Estuaries: Mangrove (grey)
	vegetation	Estuaries: Mangrove (river)
		Estuaries: Mudflat
		Estuaries: Saltmarsh
		Estuaries: Sandflat
		Estuaries: Water
		Forests: Acacia scrub
		Forests: Cool Temperate Rainforest
		Forests: Grassy Woodland

Section	Field	Data
		Forests: River She-oak Forest
		Forests: Short Dry sclerophyll
		Forests: Subtropical rainforest
		Forests: Tall Dry sclerophyll
		Forests: Tall Fern Wet sclerophyll
		Forests: Tall Grassy Forest
		Forests: Tall Shrub Wet sclerophyll
		Forests: Warm Temperate Rainforest
		Grassland: Beach/dune
		Grassland: Exotic
		Grassland: Mixed Exotic and Native
		Grassland: Native secondary
		Grassland: Native tussock
		Heaths: Coastal fringing forest
		Heaths: Coastal fringing wetlands
		Heaths: Coastal high sheltered
		Heaths: Coastal Hinterland Mountains option type 2)
		Heaths: Coastal Hinterland Mountains type 1
		Heaths: Coastal low exposed
		Heaths: Coastal tall scrub
		Heaths: Hinterland Riverine (option type 2)
		Heaths: Hinterland Riverine (type 1)
		Heaths: Tableland Allocasurina nana
		Rocky outcrops: Dry Rainforest
		Rocky outcrops: Scree Slope
		Rocky outcrops: Sedimentary Cliff edge
		Rocky outcrops: Sedimentary Platform

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Section	Field	Data
		Rocky outcrops: Volcanic basalt
		Rocky outcrops: Volcanic rhyolite
		Unknown:
		Wetlands: Drainage feed Hinterland Swamps
		Wetlands: Escarpment (frost hollows)
		Wetlands: Floodplain (rushes)
		Wetlands: Spring feed Hinterland Swamps
		Wetlands: Tree Tree Swamp (coastal and hinterland)
		Wetlands: Tree Tree Swamp
	Primary access	(escarpment and tableland) Unknown
	Tilliary access	Sealed, 2WD, All weather, Long
		vehicle
		Unsealed, 2WD, All weather, Long
		vehicle
		Unsealed, 2WD, All weather, Cars only
		Unsealed, 2WD, Dry weather only, Cars only
		Unsealed, 4WD, All weather, Cars only
		Unsealed, 4WD, Dry weather only, Cars only
		Water, Boat only
		Path, Walk-in only
	Major cultural	Yes/No
	asset Backpacking	Yes/No
	Bushwalking	Yes/No
	Canoeing	Yes/No
	Camping	Yes/No
	Caving	Yes/No
	Cultural heritage	Yes/No
	appreciation Cycling/Mountai n biking	Yes/No
	Diving/Snorkellin g	Yes/No
	Fishing	Yes/No

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Section	Field	Data
	Hang Gliding	Yes/No
	Horse Riding	Yes/No
	Motor Boating	Yes/No
	Nature Study/Died	Yes/No
	Study/Bird watching	
	Orienteering/Ro	Yes/No
	gaining	
	Picnicking	Yes/No
	Rock	Yes/No
	climbing/Abseilin g/Canyoning	
	Sailing	Yes/No
	Scenic viewing	Yes/No
	Snow activities	Yes/No
	Swimming	Yes/No
	surfing	
Site developmen	nt	
	Dayuse facilities	No day-use facilities
		Basic day-use area
		Medium day-use area
		Major day-use area
		Major facility area
	Camping facilities	No camping
	tacilities	Remote Camp area
		Basic camp area
		Camping area
		Camping ground
	Accommodation facilities	None
	iaciiilles	1 star
		2 star
		3 star
		4 star
	Duine and decision	5 star
	Primary dayuse type	Picnic area
	3,00	Lookout Trackhead
		Access point
		Visitor centre

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Section	Field	Data
GCGCIGII	Tiolu	Cultural site
	Picnic area	Yes/No
	Lookout	Yes/No
	Trackhead	Yes/No
	Access point	Yes/No
	Visitor centre	Yes/No
	Cultural site	Yes/No
Site location		
	Datum	AGD 66 (Old)
		GDA 94 (New)
	Zone	54
		55
		56
	Easting	Free text
	Northing	Free text
	Site tenure	NPWS
		State Forests
		Other:
	NPWS region	Far South Coast
		South Coast
		South West Slopes
		Snowy Mountains
	NPWS Area	Depends on region selected
	Land parcel	Free text
	Mapsheet	Free text
	Planning zone	1
		2
		3
		4
		5
Social details		
	Annual visitation	Unknown
		Up to 500
		500 to 2,000
		2,000 to 5,000
		5,000 to 10,000
		10,000 to 20,000
		20,000 to 50,000

Section	Field	Data
		50,000 to 100,000
		100,000 to 200,000
		More than 200,000
	Usage at	Unknown
	seasonal peak	Below capacity
		At capacity
		Above capacity
	Weekend usage	Unknown
	(outside peak)	Below capacity
		At capacity
		Above capacity
	Data reliability	Unknown
		Comprehensive monitoring system
		Ticket sales, Fee collection, Permits
		Traffic and/or pedestrian counters
		Spot counts, Visitor books
		Tourism Association estimate
		Staff estimate
	Significant group or commercial	Yes/No
	use Booking system	Yes/No
	Number limit	Yes/No
	Seasonal	Yes/No
	closure	163/110
	Closed building	Yes/No
	Guided only	Yes/No
	Restriction	Free text

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 2 Far South Coast NTR Plan Inventory of NTR Programs and Tours

Name of Tour Group	Location	Nature of Tour
Back Pedal Cycle Tours	Across FSC region, particularly SE Forests	Cycle touring
Batemans Bay Sea Kayaks	Batemans Bay	Estuary and open water guided kayak services
Bayview Sailing cruises	Batemans Bay	Boat cruise - fishing, Sightseeing
Bega Cheese Heritage Centre	Bega	Heritage tour
Billabong Trail Rides	Bodalla	Horse riding
Billy Joes Trail rides	Batemans Bay	Horse rides, camp out
Birds in the Bush Tours	Bemboka	Birdwatching
Blue waters Charters	Bermagui	Boat cruise-swimming, wildlife interaction
Brogo Wilderness Canoes	Brogo	Canoe hire and guided tours
Cat Balou Cruises	Eden	Whale and other marine wildlife viewing, cultural
		interpretation in Twofold Bay
Clyde Princess River cruises	Batemans Bay	Boat Cruise - sightseeing
Coastlife Adventures	Tathra	School adventure/ educational camps
Delcara Charter Services	Merimbula	Fishing, tours, diving, whale watching
Down Under Trail Bike Adventures	Across region	Motorbike tours
Eurobodalla Natural History Society		Field excursions studying fauna, flora and geology
Fishpen Charters	Merimbula	Fishing, whale watching
Freedom Charters	Eden	Whale and Dolphin Tours, pelagic bird trips, fishing, diving
		and other interactive tours
Good Times Tathra Charters	Tathra	Fishing, dolphin and whale watching.
Great Divide Tours	Across region	4WD tours and training
Headland Fishing Charters	Merimbula	Fishing, whale watching
Island Charters Narooma	Narooma	Boat cruise- fishing, wildlife interaction
Lighthouse charters	Narooma	Boat cruise-sightseeing. wildlife interaction
Merimbula Divers Lodge	Merimbula	Dive Charters and Tours
Merimbula Marina	Merimbula	Whale and Dolphin tours, pelagic bird trips, fishing, diving
		and other interactive tours.

Moruya River Boatshed	Moruya	Moruya River cruise boat
		Boat and kayak hire
Meridna River Cruises	Batemans Bay	Boat cruise-sightseeing, wildlife interaction, swimming
Narooma Charters	Narooma	Montague Island Tours, Fishing, Diving/snorkelling, Whale Watching.
Narooma Blue Water Charters	Narooma	Boat cruise-sightseeing, wildlife interaction, fishing
Narooma Offshore Charters	Narooma	Fishing, Adventure tours, diving, whale watching
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service-	Across NPWS Far South Coast Region	Guided activity environmental education, cultural and Park
Discovery Program	-	awareness programs.
National Diving Academy		Diving instruction and guided diving
Oasis Camels	Turlinjah	Camel rides
Oyster Shed Boat Hire	Batemans Bay	Oyster lease tours Boat hire
Pambula Beach Trail Rides	Pambula	Horse Riding
Parkview Demonstration Farm	Towamba	Bird Watching, Native Animals, eco tree farm
Rubber Duck Adventures	Tathra	Inflatable boat tour- scenic viewing, environmental studies
Rumbottle Wilderness River Cruises	Mallacoota	River cruise
Sapphire Coast Ecotours	Bermagui	Guided interpretation and tours
SF NSW of NSW	Eden and Bombala	Guided Forestry Tour- Wallagaraugh Forest Drive and
		Coolangubra Forest Way.
Taggit Boat Charters	Narooma	Fishing, Scenic Cruises, Whale Watching
Tantawangalo trail Rides	Candelo	Horse riding adjacent to SE Forests national Park
Top Shelf Tours	Narooma	Fishing, diving, snorkelling, whale watching.
U Canoe	Moruya	Kayak rental and closed water guided services
Umbarra Aboriginal Cultural Tours	Bermagui	Cultural Centre, Traditional Aboriginal Activities, Tours to Sacred
		Sites (Gulaga - Mount Dromedary, Biamanga –
		Mumbulla Mountain) and
Waganga Inlat angiana	Navaoma	a boat cruise on Wallaga Lake. Factorism and nature based tours of victorius and nature based tours.
Wagonga Inlet cruises	Narooma	Ecotourism and nature based-tours of waterways, rainforest, wildlife.
Wheelers Oyster Farm	Pambula	Guided interpretation tours of oyster growing process
Yellow Pinch Wildlife Park	Merimbula	Captive wildlife viewing.